

CONGRATULATING BRIGADIER
GENERAL CHRISTOPHER
FINERTY UPON HIS PROMOTION
TO BRIGADIER GENERAL

HON. KAY GRANGER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 10, 2018

Ms. GRANGER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank Brigadier General Christopher E. Finerty for his outstanding service to our country and congratulate him on his promotion to Brigadier General in the United States Air Force. General Finerty has worked closely with me, the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee and across Capitol Hill to inform and advise the Congress so that we may ensure a strong and ready National Guard. He has also helped the Pentagon work more productively with Congress, promoting a strong and efficient national defense.

General Finerty has done this work selflessly. He quietly, but tenaciously advocates for the Chief of the National Guard Bureau's priorities to make the National Guard a ready, capable force for operations in the homeland and overseas.

General Finerty's promotion grows from a career of accomplishments and experience. Prior to becoming the head of the National Guard Bureau's Office of Legislative Liaison, where he works directly for the Chief of the National Guard Bureau, General Finerty was Vice Commander of the Air National Guard Readiness Center and simultaneously the Commander of the 201st Mission Support Squadron, which together oversee personnel and policy across the country. He has previous tours in the National Guard Bureau's legislative liaison office, the Air Force congressional budget liaison office, and on the Air National Guard staff. He logged over 3,300 hours piloting HH-60 rescue helicopters and flew 45 combat missions. General Finerty is a 1992 graduate of the United States Air Force Academy.

General Finerty dedicates all of his time and energy to his work, with two exceptions—his children, Ryan and Kate. General Finerty's first priority are his children, and no father could be more devoted. Kate and Ryan inspire and strengthen him.

Please join me in congratulating General Finerty on his well-earned promotion and in expressing our gratitude for his selfless service.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. RON KIND

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 10, 2018

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to have my votes recorded on the House floor on Tuesday January 9, 2018. Had I been present, I would have voted in favor of H.R. 4581, H.R. 4564 and H. Res. 676.

MORE MONEY, LESS PROBLEMS

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 10, 2018

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, I was grateful to learn that Tide-water Boats, led by Jimmy Metts, is investing \$8.3 million to expand their manufacturing facility in Lexington, South Carolina. This investment will create 100 new jobs.

This news is on top of AFLAC announcing that they will be expanding their 700 employees in Columbia, South Carolina, managed by Daniel Lebish, and doubling their employee 401K matching funds.

On the same day Republicans passed historic tax cuts, AT&T led by Pam Lackey announced they are providing 200,000 employees a \$1,000 bonus. Comcast, whose leader in South Carolina is Douglas Guthrie, will be providing \$1,000 bonuses to 100,000 employees. BB&T, a valued corporate citizen led by Mike Brennan, will be raising their employee wages to \$15 an hour and providing a \$1,200 bonus for 27,000 employees.

Boeing of Charleston, led by Joan Robinson-Berry, announced they will be donating \$100 million to charity that focuses on education, local communities, veterans and military personnel.

But the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act is not only for businesses. I appreciate that next month, American families will see more of their own money in their paychecks.

In conclusion, God Bless our Troops, and we will never forget September 11th in the Global War on Terrorism.

Best wishes to Chairman DARRELL ISSA and Kathy Issa for their dedicated service as they announce their retirement. We look forward to their continued service for the American people.

IN RECOGNITION OF A SUCCESSFUL IDAHO CONSERVATION PROGRAM

HON. MICHAEL K. SIMPSON

OF IDAHO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 10, 2018

Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an important conservation program taking place in central Idaho that was created as part of the Sawtooth National Recreation Area and Jerry Peak Wilderness Additions Act. I also want to acknowledge the outstanding cooperation between Idaho conservationists and ranchers that have made this program a success.

The signing of the law in 2015 created three new wilderness areas totaling over 429 square miles. This jewel in the heart of Idaho was protected for future generations to enjoy. It also returned significant amounts of wilderness study areas back to multiple use allowing individuals and families to engage in outdoor and recreational activities for years to come.

When I began working on the Boulder-White Clouds bill nearly 20 years ago, ranchers on the East Fork of the Salmon River were facing significant headwinds to their traditional way of life. Lawsuits, federal regulations, and other

obstacles were making it difficult to graze on their federal allotments. In many instances, their allotted animal unit months (AUMs) had been significantly reduced and in some cases completely eliminated. The trend going forward was not positive.

It became clear to me that providing opportunities for the ranching families to continue their livelihoods would be critical to a final outcome. A final bill would need to provide area ranchers with options that could help them reset their grazing operations and provide greater certainty for them in the future.

To meet this need, we developed a program in which area ranchers could voluntarily retire individual allotments that might not be economically viable to their ongoing ranching operations in exchange for compensation from a private third party.

This program specified that agreements were to be voluntary, that ranchers would be paid for all of the AUMs on their allotment and that funding would come from third party private entities and not the federal government.

Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to say that last month marked the completion of the initial phase of voluntary retirements.

In the past year, four families have retired five allotments and received over \$1.35 million in private compensation. Some of these allotments were proving difficult to use and were marginally viable in their traditional operations. Through our program, the ranchers were paid for every AUM on each allotment.

On the conservation side, over 126,000 acres of pristine and ecologically important areas that include winter and summer range for elk and deer, important sage grouse habitat, and some of the highest elevation spawning habitat for ocean-going salmon and steelhead found anywhere will no longer be grazed. These were high conflict areas that have experienced past litigation and would probably see future litigation or regulation.

I am very pleased to say that the voluntary retirement program has been a success and a win for both the ranchers and for conservation. While the initial third party funding for the voluntary retirement program has expired, the mechanism still exists for ranchers to retire allotments in the future, should they so choose. In doing so, they will be free to enter into new agreements with new terms. These future agreements will be of their own accord between the ranchers and conservation interests.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize the following organizations and individuals for their contributions to the voluntary retirement program.

The Idaho Conservation League were the backbone behind the voluntary grazing retirement program. The legislation provided the mechanism for the voluntary retirements and they provided the muscle, resources, and expertise to carry out this initial batch of retirements.

I want to give special thanks to Rick Johnson, the Executive Director of the Idaho Conservation League. Rick worked very closely with my staff and me as we developed the program. He made sure the grant funding was in place prior to passage of the legislation so that promises made to the ranchers would be kept after the bill became law. Rick has been a true friend and partner from start to finish in this process.

A very big thanks and well done go to John Robison, Public Lands Director of the Idaho

Conservation League. John facilitated each retirement from start to finish. He worked with multiple people and agencies and exhibited great professional skill and patience in getting each retirement completed. His outstanding work with various parties under short deadlines was critical to the success of this program.

I also want to thank the ranching families on the East Fork of the Salmon River. They are great people, who with their past generations, have made significant contributions to the region and to our country. When we first met together 17 years ago they told me their concerns and we came up with an idea of how we might go forward. They put their trust in me and I believe we came up with a plan to give them an opportunity to help put them in a better place. It has been a pleasure and honor to work with each family and I can proudly say that I believe the promises we made have been kept.

I would also like to recognize the U.S. Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) for their assistance in processing the retirements. In particular, I want to thank Kit Mullen, Sawtooth National Forest Supervisor; Kirk Flannigan, Sawtooth National Recreation Area Ranger; Andrea Cox, Supervisor Rangeland Management Specialist, Sawtooth National Forest; Ed Cannady, Recreation Manager, Sawtooth National Forest; Chuck Mark, Salmon-Challis National Forest Supervisor; Kurt Pindel, Challis-Yankee Fork District Ranger; Faith Ryan, Range and Weeds Program Lead, Salmon-Challis National Forest; Tim Murphy, BLM State Director (retired); and Todd Kuck, Field Manager, BLM Challis Field Office. They each did great work and we could not have completed the retirements without them.

Finally, I would like to note that without this voluntary grazing retirement program, the Boulder-White Clouds and Jerry Peak wilderness bills would never have become law. The program was a lynchpin to the compromise that allowed us to protect one of the most pristine areas of Idaho. It seems apparent that the cost of the program was small in comparison to the benefits that future generations will receive when they enjoy the remarkable beauty and serenity of the Boulder-White Clouds and Jerry Peak. We all owe a great deal of thanks to those who provided the resources for the program and to the ranchers who put their trust in allowing it to go forward.

IN REMEMBRANCE OF GEORGE
DAVID JONES, II

HON. ROBERT J. WITTMAN
OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Wednesday, January 10, 2018

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in remembrance of George David Jones, II. David was a resident of the First District of Virginia and my hometown, Montross. David was a self-employed farmer who served the community as a member of the Westmoreland County Volunteer Fire Department. Additionally, David was a member of the Westmoreland Hunt Club, Virginia Dog Hunting Alliance, Pantico Run Hunt Club, and Eastern Virginia Young Farmers Association.

I had the pleasure of knowing David for many years and was a witness to his dedica-

tion to his family and community. David is survived by his partner, Alexandra Jones; sons, George David Jones, III and Jeffrey Flynn Jones. Mr. Speaker, I ask that you extend your thoughts and prayers to David's family and friends as they mourn the loss of their loved one. I pray that God is with David's family and friends during this difficult time.

SUPPORTING THE RIGHTS OF THE
PEOPLE OF IRAN TO FREE EX-
PRESSION

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 9, 2018

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my continued support for the people of Iran and continued support for freedom of speech as it is encapsulated in H. Res. 676, a resolution supporting the rights of the people of Iran to free expression and condemning the Iranian regime for its crackdown on legitimate protests.

On Sunday, January 7, 2018, I stood in protest with Iranian-Americans on the streets of Houston to take a stand for human rights in Iran.

At that event, I stated "It is time for freedom to take over" and I stand by that statement here in Congress and add that separation of church and state is essential for a free and democratic Iran.

On December 28, 2017, popular protests against the Iranian regime began in the city of Mashad and rapidly spread throughout the country, in the most significant antigovernment protests in Iran since June 2009.

The protesters have expressed numerous economic grievances, including the regime's widespread corruption and the Revolutionary Guard Corps' control of the country's economy.

Protesters have decried the regime's costly, destabilizing activities abroad, including its support for terrorist groups such as Hezbollah and the murderous Assad regime in Syria.

Reports indicate that more than 1,000 Iranians have been arrested and almost two dozen killed in connection with the protests.

The Iranian regime has shut down mobile internet access and has blocked and pressured companies to cut off social media applications used by activists to organize and publicize the protests.

Congress has provided authority to license the provision of communications technology to Iran to improve the ability of the Iranian people to speak freely.

I encourage the Administration to expedite the license of communications technology to Iran to improve the ability of the Iranian people to speak freely and I call on companies to reject requests by the regime to cut off the Iranian people from social media and other communications platforms.

On January 1, 2018, regime officials threatened to crack down, with Brigadier General Esmail Kowsari of Iran's Revolutionary Guard Corps stating, "If this situation continues, the officials will definitely make some decisions and at that point this business will be finished."

Congress has provided authority to designate and sanction elements of the Iranian re-

gime involved in significant corruption and serious human rights abuses.

I urge the Administration to use targeted sanctions and work to convene emergency sessions of the United Nations Security Council and the United Nations Human Rights Council to condemn the ongoing human rights violations perpetrated by the Iranian regime and establish a mechanism by which the Security Council can monitor such violations.

Iran's Revolutionary Guard Corps and its Basij militia have been sanctioned by the United States for planning and carrying out serious human rights abuses against the Iranian people, including for the cruel and prolonged torture of political dissidents, behavior that is absolutely intolerable.

The regime has routinely violated the human rights of Iranian citizens, including ongoing, systematic, and serious restrictions of freedom of peaceful assembly and association and freedom of opinion and expression, including the continuing closures of media outlets, arrests of journalists, and the censorship of expression in online forums such as blogs and websites.

The Department of State's 2016 Human Rights Report on Iran noted:

severe restrictions on civil liberties, including the freedoms of assembly, association, speech, religion, and press.

Other human rights problems included abuse of due process combined with use of capital punishment for crimes that do not meet the requirements of due process, as well as cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment; and disregard for the physical integrity of persons, whom authorities arbitrarily and unlawfully detained, tortured, or killed.

For a country that once enjoyed great pride in its freedom of thought, the information in this Report comes with sadness.

On December 29, 2017, the Department of State strongly condemned the arrest of peaceful protesters and noted that "Iran's leaders have turned a wealthy country with a rich history and culture into an economically depleted rogue state whose chief exports are violence, bloodshed, and chaos."

On January 1, 2018, the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs of the United Kingdom, Boris Johnson, stated that:

The UK is watching events in Iran closely.

We believe that there should be meaningful debate about the legitimate and important issues the protesters are raising and we look to the Iranian authorities to permit this.

On January 2, 2018, the French Foreign Ministry stated that:

French authorities are closely monitoring the situation in Iran.

Demonstrating freely is a fundamental right.

The same is true for the free movement of information.

France expresses its concern over the large number of victims and arrests.

On January 1, 2018, a spokesman for the Canadian Ministry of Foreign Affairs stated that:

We call on the Iranian authorities to uphold and respect democratic and human rights and "We are encouraged by the Iranian people who are bravely exercising their basic right to protest peacefully."

Canada will continue to support the fundamental rights of the Iranians, including freedom of expression.

As hypocrisy has it, Iran is a member of the United Nations, voted for the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and is a signatory to